

EC Meeting Draft Minutes – Spring, 2025

SHNA Executive Committee Meeting

Wednesday, August 27, 2025, 6:30 pm

Via Zoom

Draft Meeting Minutes

- I. Members in attendance via Zoom: Jon Dunham, James Jordan, Rusty Monhollon, David Mucci, Mariana Nieto, Betsy Ostrander, Matthew Paul, Meleah Perez (guest), Joan Stone, and Gary Webber.
- II. Minutes of the spring meeting, May 7, 2025, accepted and approved by acclamation.
- III. Treasurer's Report, presented by James Jordan, new balance of \$1,250.00. We have a large percentage of new members. Jordan sent thank you notes for renewals. The report was approved by acclamation.
- IV. Old Business
 1. LAN update was given by Gary Webber. Gary Webber and Sherry Ellenbecker attended the August meeting. LAN is an unincorporated association of Neighborhood Associations, founded in the 90's over various crises in Lawrence neighborhoods. It's an umbrella association to help neighborhood associations solve problems and deal effectively with the city. Annual dues are \$25.00. LAN was Opposed to recent changes to the development codes and has complained to the City Commission, but it had no effect. They would like to know what they could do to better lobby for homeowners regarding taxes and costs of homes along with other topics. They would like to be more effective and are open to suggestions. Perez had a question regarding LAN attendance. Webber explained that all are welcome to attend but only 1 vote by a designated representative is allowed per neighborhood. SHNA would welcome any member to attend.
 2. Matthew Paul would like members of the executive committee to please check their emails: exec@sunsethillna.org is the preferred avenue for email communication.
 3. Matthew Paul asked for a discussion regarding development of neighborhood signs that would provide information about our neighborhood association and our boundaries. These signs could be placed in various places throughout our neighborhood like Centennial Park. Webber suggested forming a committee, and volunteered to coordinate

with the City, contact Parks and Rec, and identify required sign information. Nieto likes QR codes. Approved by acclamation.

4. Matthew Paul motioned that it would be appropriate to remove the previous SHNA President, Jeannie Pease, from the SHNA Executive Committee distribution list. It has been years since she was President, and she has not been active on the Executive Committee. Webber seconded this motion, approved.

5. First Baptist Church sent the committee an email asking if we would include information regarding their Fall Festival in our next newsletter. It was determined that existing protocol for the SHNA newsletter is to not promote any businesses in the newsletter. Churches would be considered businesses regarding SHNA membership. Business promotion is permitted solely for newly admitted members. Business memberships are \$10.00 and a general article regarding that business is included in the newsletter when they first join.

V. New Business

1. Matthew Paul welcomed a guest to the meeting, Meleah Perez. Perez is new to the neighborhood and lives near Centennial Park. Paul welcomed her and briefly explained how SHNA works. Perez introduced herself and expressed interest in becoming involved in SHNA and the EC.

2. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 19, 2025, at 6:30 PM on Zoom.

3. Meeting adjourned.

SHNA News

Crestline Drive Speed Humps Approved by City Commission

The Lawrence City Commission has approved installing speed humps along Crestline Drive between 9th Street and Bob Billings Parkway as part of the second Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NMTP) project.

City Engineer David Cronin reported to the Executive Committee on the public outreach campaign for this proposal. Postcards were sent to all residents in the eastern two-thirds of Sunset Hill requesting input. Cronin reported that overall, 74 of the 111 respondents supported the proposed speed cushions, 9 indicated partial support and 27 were not supportive of the proposed speed cushions.

The Connected City Advisory Board received the project information and public feedback, voicing support for the project. The recommendation to proceed with the project was considered on the City Commission Consent Agenda on Tuesday Aug 5th and was approved without comment. City Municipal Services and Operations intends to complete design plans this fall and construct next summer. Updates will be provided on the website (<https://lawrenceks.gov/community-engagement/crestline/>)

as the project moves forward.

SHNA Membership Rebounds

You may remember from a 2024 summer SHNA newsletter article that the membership in SHNA has been declining since the pandemic. In 2025, for the first time since 2020, the membership has significantly increased from 88 members in 2024, to the current membership of 113. In more good news, 45 of the current members are new to SHNA.

At the spring EC meeting, members discussed possible reasons for this welcome increase. Factors which may have improved our membership numbers include:

- Flyering the entire neighborhood prior to the 2025 Annual Meeting for the first time since 2017,
- Placement of yard signs announcing the Annual Meeting,
- Including a QR code on the flyer with a link to the membership web page,
- Introduction of online membership application and payment via Zeffy, and
- Automatic renewal capabilities of Zeffy.

The Executive Committee was pleased and encouraged that SHNA membership has rebounded and now includes many members who are new to SHNA. Increased participation means a better-informed neighborhood, and an enhanced ability to affect positive change in Sunset Hill.

Call for Applause Award Nominations

It is time again to nominate our neighbors for the annual SHNA Applause Award!

Once a year the Sunset Hill Neighborhood Association recognizes neighbors who have recently enhanced their home through renovations, landscaping, or other improvements. If

you know of someone that has been working hard on their home, rental, or business and would be a good candidate for this award, please send a nomination email to Joan Stone at jomstone1959@gmail.com.

Thank your neighbors for their hard work and investment in Sunset Hill! Nominate them in an email to Joan! The names of the 2025-2026 Applause Award recipients will be published in the Winter issue of this newsletter.

Neighborhood News

Sidewalk near Sunset Hill Elementary repaired by USD 497

At the 2025 annual meeting, one participant asked about issues involving the sidewalk South of Sunset Hill Elementary that connects Yale Rd. to Wellington Rd. The participant noted that rainwater runoff was eroding the ground beside the sidewalk and creating mud puddles after rains and slippery conditions during freezing weather.

Not long after that meeting landscape crews from USD 497 installed plastic barriers to deflect rainwater runoff from the sidewalk. Unfortunately, this was only partially successful. Runoff continued to erode the soil south of the sidewalk and accumulate at the base of the slope. A month later, the landscaping crew returned, removed the plastic barrier, and installed a runoff filter tube along the sidewalk. So far, this remediation has proved much more successful.

The Executive Committee would like to thank USD 497 for their prompt action on this safety problem. Lawrence Public Schools works hard to maintain safe and attractive campuses. Their efforts to solve traffic issues, though not always entirely successful, have improved traffic conditions at the end of school days around both schools. The SHNA EC thanks them for their efforts in a small way each year, by donating \$50.00 to each school for their general funds. By working together with our public schools, we help provide a safe and supportive environment for the education of Lawrence students.

Lantern Walk Returns to Sunset Hill

The newsletter editor recently received an email from Stephen Mason, Lawrence City Planner, informing SHNA that they are bringing the Lantern Walk back to the Sunset Hill Neighborhood. You may remember that the city sponsored this event last year to promote walking, specifically for school-age children. Here is a link to the 2024 spring newsletter

which contains an article on the 2024 Lantern Walk on page 5: <https://sunsethillna.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/SHNA-newsletter-2024-09-14.pdf>

This year's event will be held on Wednesday, October 22nd, starting at 6pm. They be using the same route as last year and hope to have even more vendors along the path with information and activities. SHNA will send out an email to members with an invitation when more details are available. _____

City Introduces Citizen Connect Portal

With recent changes to the Lawrence Development Code, many Lawrence citizens have requested more information about development projects in their neighborhood. In response, the city has purchased a software suite and introduced an interactive map called Citizen Connect. This interactive tool displays information and the locations of development related functions such as Plans, Permits, Inspections, as well as Rental Licenses, Code Compliance cases, and Business and Professional Licenses.

Citizen Connect allows residents to create email alerts for new and existing cases based on their status. Users may also download data directly from the tool and compare trends over time. Citizen Connect provides greater access to the development information the city collects.

The following guides provide a general overview and step-by-step instructions for using Citizen Connect:

- Citizen Connect Overview Guide

<https://assets.lawrenceks.org/pds/epl/citizen-connect-overview.pdf>

- How To Create an Account and Create Alerts

<https://assets.lawrenceks.org/pds/epl/citizen-connect-account-alerts.pdf>

To create email alerts, it is necessary to open an account by providing your email address and setting a strong password. Once you have signed in, you can set boundaries to establish your area of interest, and then request periodic notices of permits issued, rental licenses issued, inspections made, and much more. This is a new service, and your editor has identified one issue: this website may not be supported by the Firefox browser, so if you want to sign in to your account, you will need to use a browser other than Firefox. For more information, please browse the Citizen Connect web page at: <https://cityoflawrence-ks-cc.connect.socrata.com/>

City Asks Residents to “Mow Smarter”

The City of Lawrence Municipal Services & Operations (MSO) Department is reminding residents that what goes into our storm drains flows directly into our streams, lakes, and the Kansas River—untreated.

Stormwater isn’t filtered at a treatment plant like the City's wastewater. That means when grass clippings, leaves, fertilizer, or pet waste end up in the street or near storm drains, they wash into our waterways during the next rainfall. These pollutants can fuel harmful algae blooms, reduce water quality, and damage aquatic ecosystems.

Just one freshly mowed lawn can release up to 100 pounds of algae-causing nutrients if those grass clippings make their way into nearby lakes or ponds.

To help protect our waterways:

- Always blow or sweep clippings back onto your lawn—never into the street.
- Mulch-mow your yard to naturally fertilize your lawn and reduce runoff.
- Use fertilizers and lawn chemicals sparingly and according to label instructions.
- Compost yard waste or use the City’s yard waste collection service.
- Plant native species and install rain gardens to help manage stormwater at the source.

This is part of the City’s broader efforts to protect water quality and reduce flooding risks through green infrastructure and public education. From maintaining over 400 miles of stormwater pipes to supporting resident-led rain garden projects, MSO is committed to building a cleaner, more resilient Lawrence.

“We all have a part to play in protecting our water,” said Michael Leos, Communications Specialist for MSO. “These small actions—like keeping grass clippings out of the street—can have a big impact when everyone does their part.”

Residents can learn more about proper yard care and stormwater management at: lawrenceks.org/mso/stormwater

Let’s work together this summer to keep our streets clean and our rivers clear.

Developer Requesting Higher Density Zoning Change for Property Near Sunset Hill

The Lawrence Douglas County Metropolitan Planning Commission will consider an item at the regular meeting beginning 6:30 PM on Wednesday September 24th to:

1. rezone approximately 2.68 acres located at 2000 Bluffs drive from R3 (residential medium density) to district R34 (residential high density) district, and
2. Rezone approximately 3.96 acres at the same location from M2 (mixed large neighborhood district) to R4 (residential high density) district.

The site was previously considered as a potential location for Lawrence's City Hall. The idea was presented back in September 2024 because of a lack of space in the current City Hall building at 6 E. Sixth St.; however, the City Commission voted 3-2 in October 2024 to scuttle the plans to purchase the site after lengthy public input that urged commissioners to reconsider moving City Hall from downtown.

Interested parties are encouraged to submit comments in writing to planning@lawrenceks.org. The Commission has established a deadline for receipt of all written communications of no later than 10:00 AM on Monday September 26, 2025. To participate in the meeting remotely please reference the top of the online agenda to receive the zoom link please check the online agenda for updates and changes at: <https://lawrenceks.civicweb.net/portal/>.

Although this property is not within the boundaries of Sunset Hill, it is adjacent to the northeast corner of the neighborhood. The developers plan to add a mix of multifamily housing options on the vast parking lots that make up the eastern portion of the property.

That's all for now. Enjoy the cooler fall weather!

And thanks for supporting SHNA